

TN480.90 Communications

(a) Introduction. The following policies are to be used by employees to communicate in a standard manner via e-mail, voicemail, telephone, cellular phone, and official letterhead.

(b) Policy.

1. E-mail

i. After the responsible principal staff member has obtained the appropriate signature on a Tennessee bulletin, he/she will e-mail it to all employees in Tennessee. It will then be e-mailed to the state web master (or assistant) for posting to the web page.

ii. Only principal staff members are authorized to send “all employee” e-mail messages.

iii. All employees will check e-mail at least once per day when on official duty with access to a USDA computer.

iv. Employees are reminded to use office e-mail only for official business.

2. Voice Mail

i. All employees will check voice mail at least once per day when on official duty.

ii. All employees who have Government cell phones should check the cell phone voice mail as soon as message notification is received.

iii. If managers have urgent need to use voice mail to disseminate “policy” information, the manager should always follow up with written policy document.

iv. Voice mail messages should be as brief as possible, while providing necessary information.

v. Principal Staff will be responsible for distribution of voice mailboxes.

3. Telephones

i. The following standard greeting is to be used by all employees in all offices when answering the Government phone: “Natural Resources Conservation Service, this is (employee’s name)”.

Subpart J - Communications

TN480.90(b)3.ii.

ii. All telephones in all offices must be answered by some means (live voice, answering machine, or voice mail greeting) during official business hours of Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

iii. Service Centers are to use the standard script provided by LAN/WAN/VOICE for the recorded telephone greeting.

iv. Automated greeting (answering machines) for other locations such as Area Offices should always begin with "Hello, you have reached the Natural Resources Conservation Service..."

v. The main telephone in the State Conservationist's office should always be personally answered; this phone is NOT to be picked up by an answering machine during regular business hours.

vi. State Office employees (and others who have access to automated voicemail messaging on their telephone system) should keep the voicemail greeting current enough that callers know if the employee is out of the office and if so, for how long.

4. Cellular Phones

i. Principal Staff members will be responsible for distribution of cell phones.

ii. When employees are in the office they should use the office phone, not the Government cellular phone.

iii. Employees should always observe safety procedures when using a cell phone while operating a vehicle.

5. Official Letterhead

i. All written correspondence that goes out of an NRCS office must be on official NRCS letterhead

ii. The attached formal and informal letterheads are the only authorized versions to be used by NRCS offices in Tennessee.

iii. Letterhead should be printed in black and white.